

# THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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## The Old Stage Coach.

BY NAN TODD.

"ALL ready, fellows?" whispered Hal Winter.

"You bet!" replied Tommy Brown.

So out of the dusty barn with a rattle and clatter swung the old Chester coach, with two boys pushing and four boys tugging. It was Hallowe'en night. For days these boys had been planning this very "stunt." The Chester home had been closed for many years, ever since Alexander Chester, whom the older townspeople remembered as a cross, disagreeable man, had gone away.

The old Chester carriage was unique, built similar to an old stage coach. The boys did not appreciate its value, nor think of the noted personages that had ridden in it, or the battles that had been planned in its dusky interior. For years and years no one had seen it, so curiosity had ceased, until Hal Winter and his mother had moved to town. Hal's mother was a niece of Alexander Chester. In years gone by there had been a quarrel between Mrs. Winter's mother and Alexander Chester and years so far had not healed the wound. Then Mrs. Winter had moved to Linden, the home of former Chesters, three months previous, broken in health and spirits. Hal's father was dead and there was just sufficient funds left to make the simple home possible. Hal knew about the old quarrel, as did every one in town, and what it meant to his little mother. So the prospect of dumping the old coach as a Hallowe'en prank seemed very alluring.

It was late and the road was deserted. The moon peered out from behind gray clouds as the old coach rattled merrily over the stony road. One might imagine it seemed to enjoy the outing.

"Gee! It runs hard," grunted Nick Clark.

"Ought to; hasn't been out of the barn for years and years."

"Let's rest," gasped Tommy, who was fat and so out of breath. The coach accordingly came to a standstill.

"Let's open it and see what's inside," said Nick.

"There isn't anything in there," replied Hal, "'cause Tommy and I looked when we were in the barn last night and planned 'the stunt!'"

"We'd better get a hump; it's far to Perkins' swamp," advised Nick.

"Wouldn't you think the geezer who owns this thing would stick around and be decent to Hal and his mother? Some of the money is theirs," said another boy.

"Shucks! Mother and I can get along without his help, I guess," replied Hal, his

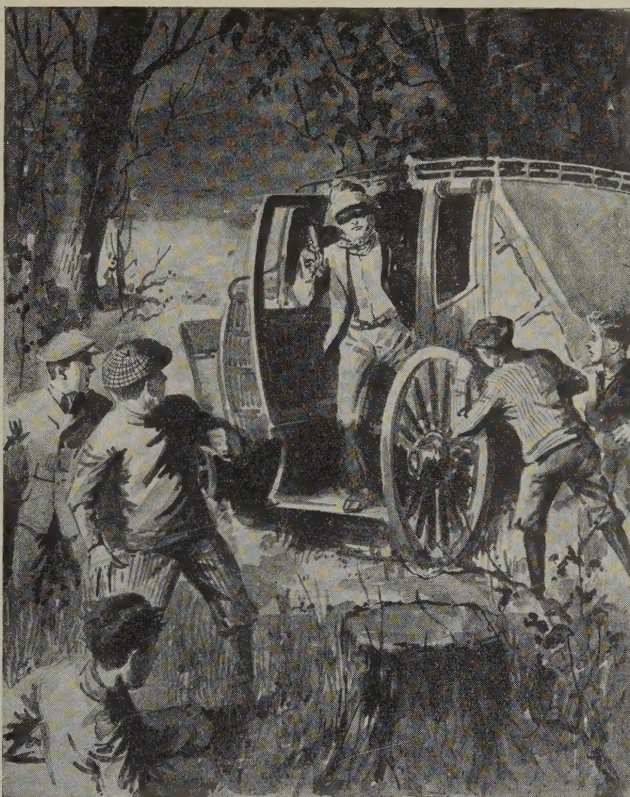
eyes flashing. "I'll be a man some day. Heigh-ho, let's start."

Again the old coach rumbled on its merry way. Over the road, up a little hill, down a big one, all with a noisy clatter it hastened along. The boys now did not stop until they had reached Perkins' swamp, then they drew the old coach from the main road into a path leading to the misty bog.

"My father always said that when he was a boy he'd planned many a time to do just this thing—but he didn't have the nerve," said Nick.

"So did mine," said another, "but they might not like it now if they saw us." The boys laughed.

"Well—here she goes—for the cat-tails"—



By H. Weston Taylor.

"Hands up, or I shall shoot!"

"There's that noise again," whispered Tommy, looking around nervously.

"What noise?"

"I heard it once in the barn—and when we stopped—it sounds like someone breathing"—

"Rats!"

"Let's go back," whispered Tommy, looking toward the swamp, where gray clouds of mist were rising. The boys jumped as an owl hooted from a near-by pine tree.

"I say—come on—let's dump the old thing, and"—

There was a soft click of the latch of the coach door. The boys turned and faced the cold, black barrel of a gun.

"Hands up!" a deep voice growled.

"Hands up, or I shall shoot!" Twelve trembling hands were raised.

"Sit down!"

The boys obeyed. They were very glad to do so, for their knees wobbled so they could scarcely stand. Who was this strange, tall man, with his face covered with a mask and a hat pulled down over his forehead, and who walked up and down in front of his prisoners with the bold swagger of a pirate? His back for an instant turned, Hal moved nearer the road, hoping to escape and return with aid. For without question they were in the hands of a robber.

Suddenly the man turned. "Get back there! Put your hands down. Come here." Hal obeyed.

"What you trembling for?"

"I'm not!"

"Then take this gun and see if you can shoot."

Hal pulled the trigger and a shot rang out into the night. The man laughed and slapped Hal's back. But the boy's lips trembled.

"So—you are the one that first thought of bringing this old coach here?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Now—look here, young man! I was in the barn and heard you and that fat boy planning the whole thing. Now—I guess you'll draw the coach back. I always wanted a ride in a real coach, so I came along. Then I felt sort of sorry for 'the geezer,' as you called him, who isn't around to look after his things. I was using the barn for a sort of a hiding-place, for the purpose of keeping track of you desperate characters. Now—what shall I do with you?"

The boys trembled and the man laughed as he adjusted the mask and squared his shoulders with determination.

"I say—what's your name?"

"Hal Winter," mumbled the boy.

"Winter—you say!"

"Yes, sir—but—please let us go home—we"—

"Why—you just came!"

"We"—

"See here, young fellow, I have more right than you think, keeping you desperados here. You go to that old coach and bring me the baskets you will find there."

Hal hesitated. "Don't you balk, or I'll pepper you with bullets."

Presently Hal returned, lugging a huge basket. "Get the other one, too. Hurry—you fellows lend a hand!" Mystified and frightened, the boys obeyed.

Then a fire was built from sticks Tommy had been told to gather. As the flames shot into the air the boys gathered close, and somehow its cheer put courage into their hearts. Suddenly the man seemed less dangerous, for he had laid aside his mask and the boys



saw that his face was tanned, wrinkled, and not unkindly.

"Open the basket," the stranger demanded of Hal and Tommy.

The boys gasped as they did so, for tucked inside the mysterious basket were plates, knives and forks, cups, a slab of bacon, some potatoes, a small sack of flour, two cans of condensed milk, and a huge pancake griddle gracing the top, the magic key to the contents.

"Go to the coach, you [pointing toward Nick Carter], and get the coffee pot you'll find there: It has sung its way through many a lonely camp."

By this time, the stove made from four stones was a mass of glowing coals, and the bacon already was sending its appetizing fragrance into the night. Of course the boys no longer demanded that they should be allowed to go home. This was a Hallowe'en lark of some importance. They had not as yet discovered the name and occupation of their new friend. He still remained to them either a robber or a pirate, possibly a horse trader, at any rate a wizard at making pancakes.

"You fellows are wondering who I am? When I decided to come along, I also decided we would be hungry after the run. My name is—Chester." He looked toward Hal as he spoke, who already had risen to his feet and stood staring at the stranger sitting so comfortably in the glow of the fire.

"Yes, Chester, my boy. I'm that cross old geezer of an uncle, Hal."

"When did you come? My mother doesn't know you are in town."

"Nor any one else. I had planned to leave, until I overheard you boys talking in the barn. Then I stayed to look after the old coach, so dear to my grandfather—and sort of square myself with you all. Can't we be friends?"

"Why—sure!" answered Hal, shaking the man's hand. "And please, sir, let us draw you home!"

"No, sir-ee! When this spread is over, we'll all lend a hand and have the coach back in town by no time." And they did.

The following day there was occasion for much happiness in Linden, when Hal and his mother went to the old Chester home to live, and it was discovered the owner had returned. And the coach,—well, it rests in peace in the dusty barn, satisfied that the Hallowe'en outing should have ended so happily and be without doubt its last wild journey out into the world.

### Hallowe'en.

BY NANCY BYRD TURNER.

**H**ALLOWE'EN, Hallowe'en!  
Pop corn's snapping in the heat,  
Chestnuts toasting, apples roasting,  
Taffy stewing thick and sweet.  
How the frisky shadows dance—  
Like black goblins in a dance;  
Down the mantelshelf an elf  
Runs with twinkling feet.

Hallowe'en, Hallowe'en!  
Pumpkin heads are all alight,  
Grinning yellow at a fellow,  
In a row—a silly sight.  
Thought I saw a witch or two  
Pass the window, didn't you?  
Fairies must be out, no doubt—  
—'Tis the Wonder Night.

*Youth's Companion.*

### That Sand-colored Coat.

BY EDNA S. KNAPP.

(No. 4 in the "Lois" series.)

**W**HICH is uglier, my lantern or Bobby's?" Lois inquired as she set the row of toothpick teeth more askew in Jack's head. "Usually Bobby wins the palm, but I really think this time mine is more hideous."

"Put your lanterns in a row," suggested Mrs. Harvey. "Then I can decide better."

Soon four lanterns shone in a grinning row on the table, while the laughing owners pointed out the peculiar attractions of each. "This is the third one I have made," Lois remarked to Janet from next door.

"We raised sixty-six pumpkins in all, so we had plenty of material," chuckled Bobby.

"Avis has made the most artistic, but Lois has the ugliest," was Mrs. Harvey's verdict.

"Get your things on and come along, it is nearly dark enough," Avis said.

Lois plunged into the sand-colored coat that had been Isabel Harrington's, jerked on her cap, and turned toward the rest. All were ready to join the procession of young folks who paraded the village street at dark on Hallowe'en before making calls on their special friends.

"You have your punk?" called Janet.

"Of course I have, matches are such a nuisance," responded Lois. "Whew, how this wind blows!"

"My lantern is out," lamented Janet, stopping to light it.

"There goes mine," declared Lois in disgust. "Oh, bother! Lend me a smile from your Jack-o'-lantern, will you? I've dropped my punk, too."

Both stopped, but the slowmatch refused to be found. "Go along and I'll run back for a box of matches," ordered Lois, starting in haste.

"Do you need matches? Take along something on which to light them," warned mother, but evidently Lois did not hear. She soon caught up with the rest and had her lantern burning.

"This is the worst night we have ever marched," Janet said as she lighted up repeatedly.

"Matches do it all right, and we have time enough," returned Lois, contentedly. "Just think, by this time to-morrow night, Janet, I'll have a new coat instead of this old thing."

"That looks better than what most of us wear," remarked Janet, coolly.

"I suppose it is decent, but I've saved and saved my money until now I have enough to get a new coat and hat and maybe a school-dress. It takes a long time to save money, and I do so want to buy every pretty thing I see." Lois sighed at the thought of many temptations conquered in the past months.

"Think what fun it will be to choose your own clothes and know that it is money you have earned that will pay for them," consoled Janet.

"Then, too, I am so tall that I can't wear made-over things any more, because I'm the biggest one in the family," rejoiced Lois. "It is lots of fun to live, isn't it? Here we are at Miss Nan's; let's slip out and surprise her."

That lady, lying quietly on her couch, heard a scrambling sound outside, before two hideous faces looked in at her. She called the girls to come in, much amused at their account of the lantern parade.

"Janet will bring the mail to-morrow, because I'm going to town with mother to get my new coat," Lois explained. "It has taken me such a time to get together money enough. You know mother promised last summer she would take me."

"I remember," said Miss Nan, quietly.

"Oh, won't I have a good time to-morrow!" exclaimed Lois. Janet and Miss Nan looked at her radiant face, then at each other in silence.

However, Mrs. Harvey was not so reticent, when Lois danced into the house, after leaving Jack outside. She asked at once, "What ails your coat, Lois?"

"Why, nothing," answered Lois, carelessly, but she glanced down at the front of the garment.

"What did you do to it?"

"Scratched matches on it all the evening. I hadn't any other place," explained the culprit.

"It looks like the sandpaper thing I gave mamma last Christmas," commented Janet.

"We cannot go to town to-morrow," Mrs. Harvey said. "I shall have to wash that coat before you can wear it again."

Lois did not speak, but the tears came into her eyes.

"Cheer up, little daughter," said mother, kindly. "We will go next week Saturday if nothing happens to prevent."

"Nothing shall," vowed Lois, with her teeth shut firmly together.

Nothing did happen this time. Saturday the morning train bore two happy passengers, a tall bright-faced girl in a neat sand-colored coat and a lady who looked enough like Lois to be her mother. The girl enjoyed every minute of the trip and nothing escaped her notice,—the numbers of workmen who got off at a certain big factory, an astonishing hat worn by a lady in the next seat, or a couple of tiny Japanese children they saw in the waiting-room. Even the dusty-looking English sparrows interested her, and she wanted to stop to see everything in all the store windows.

"Lois," protested Mrs. Harvey, "we have much to do. We can't take time to see everything in the city in one day."

"I suppose not," Lois admitted with a sigh.

"We are nearly at Wright's," said Mrs. Harvey. "This is a specialty shop for infants' clothing. We'd better go in here to get the patterns and the little socks and shoes for the doll I am to dress for Amy Harrington's birthday."

"The doll is nearly as big as Amy," Lois remarked. "Do you have to get real patterns for it, mother?"

"Yes, dear, real patterns. You know I am to make it four sets of things right through. Would you like to buy out the place for your doll?"

Lois laughed. "The things are pretty, but I don't care for dolls any more. Anyway; I have no time now to play with them." She helped in choosing the pretty things for the big doll, then they went to the great department store mother liked best.

"We will select your coat and hat," said Mrs. Harvey. "That is, I shall be glad to help you with my advice, but as you earned the money, you may spend it as you choose."

"I don't want a light-colored coat, it shows the dirt so," Lois decided at once. She was half inclined to buy the first one



the polite clerk showed her, but mother asked to see others, then still more.

Some were too light, some too expensive, some made the girl look too old, some were a close fit. "You know you will have to wear it more than one season, and you are growing rapidly," warned mother. Just as Lois was getting desperate, mother said, "We will look at some other places, have luncheon, and maybe come back here."

Lunch at a restaurant was a delight, and after it they went back to the big department store, where they found and bought a dainty belted coat of blue serge, a velvet hat to match, a band of gold lace to go around the crown and a quill for trimming. "This is the best value for your money we have found to-day," remarked Mrs. Harvey. "The schooldress can wait a while."

Their shopping was over early, so they had time to go to one or two places Lois had learned about from her history, and the night train brought home two tired but happy people. Before going to bed, Lois trimmed her hat so she could wear hat and coat to church in the morning.

Sunday afternoon Mrs. Harvey went for a walk in the woods, as she often did; it rested her and put her in tune for the week, she said. They found various treasures and Lois walked up Miss Nan's steps with her hands full of bittersweet berries and cedar twigs. "Here is an autumn bouquet," she announced.

"And Lois in her new hat and coat, very becoming and suitable," responded Miss Nan. "Thank you for the bouquet. Please put it in the brown vase. That hat is charming with your gold locks, girlie."

"Mother said she didn't notice at the time how nearly the lace matched my hair," remarked Lois, as she put the vase in place and carefully laid aside her wraps. "Mother said I might stay until time for evening service," she said. Then she added thoughtfully, "Miss Nan, was it right that I wanted my new things for church to-day?"

"I think it is only right and proper to care for one's appearance in church or chapel. It is only respectful to the Owner, as Grandfather used to say. But when we put clothes before everything else, we are making a big mistake," was Miss Nan's answer.

"One has to think of clothes a lot," said Lois, soberly. "You have to decide what you need, and earn the money for them. Then you have to find out first how they will wear, and if they'll show the dirt, and if they'll look well with the other things you have. I think clothes are very interesting indeed. I'm going to learn to take care of mine. Maybe it will be easier with these new ones of my very own. I mean to be as prim and dainty as Avis herself."

For a time it seemed as if Lois was really succeeding in this; nothing happened for a whole month, to her mother's secret relief.

One morning in December the air was full of snow and sleet, driven by a stinging wind; the sidewalks were masses of slush, ice, and mud left from the last storm. Miss Hathaway telephoned to the teacher that there would be no school, but word came so late that some of the children had already started. In despair, the teacher called up Lois.

"Will you go to the village houses to tell the pupils not to come," she begged, "and then to the schoolhouse and send home the ones who are already there? I will gladly pay you a quarter when I see you."

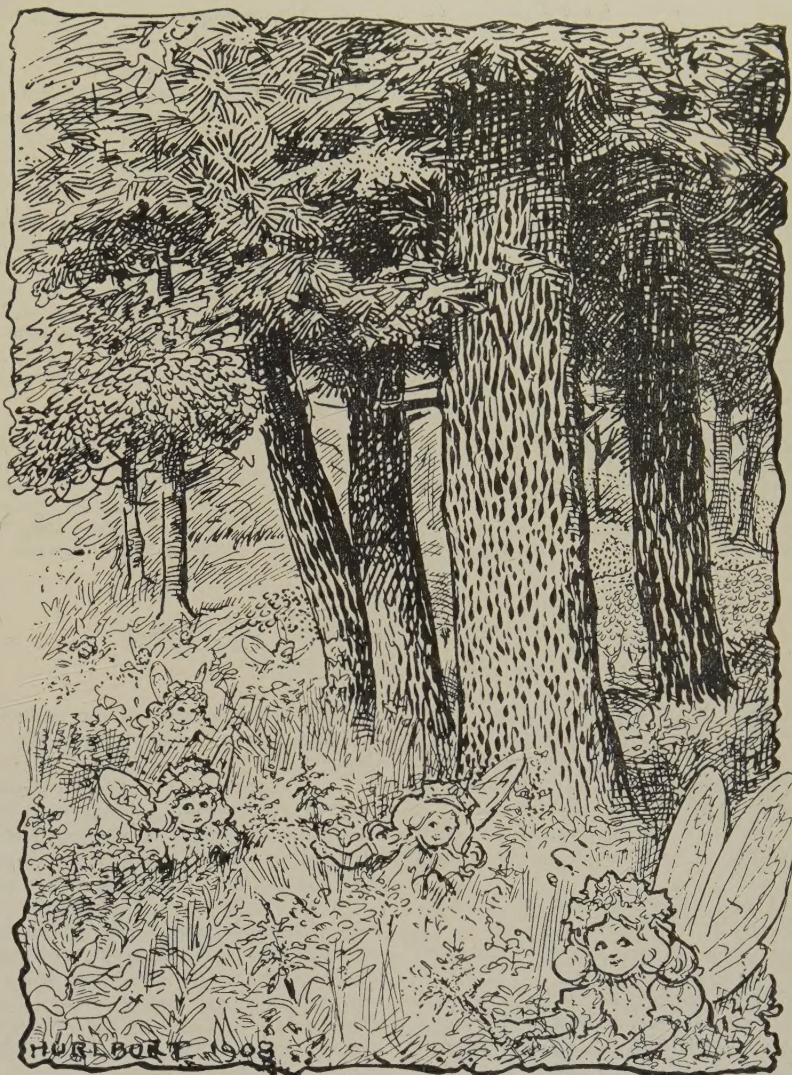
"Of course I will," answered Lois, blithely. "I don't mind the weather. I've just come

## Playing Fairies.

BY HARRIET IVES.

I LIKE to go away  
Where fields lie low and brown,

And play I'm living there  
Within a Fairy Town.



Where walls are clover leaves,  
Grown thick as they can be;  
To house the Fairy folk  
And feast the bird and bee.

While there I play a game  
About a King and Queen  
And fairy Princess too,  
The fairest ever seen.

And tiny playmates come  
To whisper in my ear  
Such secrets as the grown-up folks  
Will never, never hear.

That's why I go away  
Where fields lie low and brown.  
I could not play a fairy game  
Within a noisy town.

in from my paper route, so I'm all ready to start."

"Pull down your cap well and take along Miss Nan's mail," said Mrs. Harvey. "I'm sorry you have to go out again."

"I like it; it is just fun," answered Lois, sincerely. She went over her route again, telephoning where she could. "This does not take long, because the place is so small," she thought. "Now for Miss Nan's." It was rather a tug going up the hill, but she reached there safely, left the mail, walked the bank wall, and jumped from the end without looking, her usual way. Her feet struck a bit of ice and next instant she lay full length in a damp and very cold bed.

"I am a sight!" she exclaimed as she rose, dripping, and plastered with mud. "I know exactly what Bobby will say."

A quick trip was made to the school, which was in sight; then Lois walked demurely into Miss Nan's to make surface repairs and get warm before going home on the run.

Mrs. Harvey looked up as she entered. "Another accident, daughter?"

"My foot slipped and I fell," explained Lois, slowly.

"I think I had better wash that coat again," said mother, laying aside her sewing.

Determined to look at the cheerful side, Lois remarked later in the day, "Anyway, I earned a quarter."

Wringing the coat for the last time, Mrs. Harvey said quizzically, "I think I have earned that quarter."

Lois held out the coin in silence, but Mother Harvey, smiling, shook her head.





# THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

DORCHESTER, MASS.,  
16 Winter Street.

Dear Miss Buck,—I go to the First Parish Church of Dorchester. I am fortunate in having Mr. Lincoln, the superintendent of our Sunday school, for my teacher in Sunday school. If I am not absent next Sunday, I will have had four years' perfect attendance.

Your friend,  
AUSTIN W. TYLER.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.,  
279 Ninth Avenue.

Dear Miss Buck,—I go to the Unitarian Sunday school of San Francisco, Cal. I love Sunday school. My teacher is Miss Tomlinson, and our superintendent is Mr. Taylor.

It is a pretty little church covered with beautiful ivy. Some birds nest in the ivy in nesting-time.

The preacher is Mr. Dutton.  
It is a very happy Sunday school indeed.  
I am nine years old. I write stories, and some day I will send you one.

With best wishes,  
DORIS M. CANNEY.

ROSLINDALE, MASS.,  
632 South Street.

My dear Miss Buck,—We attend the First Church Sunday school in Boston and would like very much to belong to the Beacon Club. There are seven in our class and we are studying the books of the Old Testament.

Hoping you will send us Beacon buttons, we wish to remain,

Yours truly,

ALBERTA SCHMITT.  
CAROLINA ANDERSON.  
IRENE SCHNABEL.  
MARGARET LORENSON.  
MYRTLE MILLER.  
ROSE TIERAUF.

## How Auntie Nan Learned About the Mullen.

BY FRANCES MARGARET FOX.

AUNTIE NAN was the only one in the family who tried to make Carolyn see the reason why she must go to school and learn to read. Carolyn cried and did not want to go to school. She said, "I want to play out doors and watch the birds and pick flowers, and I don't care if I never know how to read!"

Father said, "Carolyn must go to school, so that ends it!"

Mother said, "There, there, child, don't cry!"

Auntie Nan, though, asked father a question. He was digging out mullen from mother's flower-bed near the side porch. "Fred," she began. Auntie Nan called him Fred because he was her brother. "What do you know about mullen?"

"I know it is a weed, and that is all I do know!" was the laughing answer.

Carolyn's mother didn't know anything more than that, either, about the velvety mullen, except that she didn't like to have it growing in her flower-garden.

"Well," Aunt Nan went on, "I guess you two have missed something interesting if you have not been reading the latest about mullen. If you had, you would know that the Irish plant it in their flower-gardens and call it the American velvet plant. Dear me! If I couldn't read, I don't know what I should do! Now when I look at that mullen, it makes me think, for one thing, about a funeral procession back in the old city of Rome over in Italy!"

Carolyn wiped her eyes. She was six years old, while the country children she played with began going to school when they were five. "Mullen doesn't make me think of a funeral," she told the family.

"No," answered Auntie Nan, "because you cannot read. Those who cannot read surely lead dull lives! If you were grown up like me and couldn't read, you might see that picture of a tall mullen stalk in blossom in the same book I saw the other day, but you would not know that the lines under the picture say

that the Romans used to dip mullen stalks in tallow and then used them for funeral torches.

"Mullen grows out in the open as you have noticed, and it wears thick velvet to keep the sun from scorching it in summer, and for an overcoat in winter. Mullen has been over here so long that the people of Europe have forgotten that it was not here when Christopher Columbus came. The mullen was living in Europe and Asia in the beginning, and was brought to America after ships began crossing the ocean from Europe. A mullen plant of long ago sent her seeds over here in some way, and the mullen has since then spread all over our country."

"Did you read anything else?" Carolyn inquired.

"Oh, yes; a great deal has been learned and written about mullens. In some places it has been called the taper flower, because it reminded the people of tall candles that witches are supposed to have carried. Carolyn, remember that, and sometime have a witches' procession with all the children. Each one of you get a tall mullen stalk in blossom and march with it. You must carry the stalk straight because you are to play that the yellow blossoms are the flames of the candles, and lighted candles have to be handled with care. Why, where are you going? That is not all I read in the book about mullens!"

"I am going for my slate and primer," Carolyn answered. "I see the children coming down the road and they told mother they were going to stop for me to go to school with them. I am going to tell them about the witches' tapers, and we'll all march to school carrying mullens for candles, just for fun. Auntie Nan, I have decided to learn to read!"

That is how it happened that many tall mullen stalks also went to school that morning for the first time in their lives, and that was something new to Auntie Nan about mullens!

## RECREATION CORNER.

### ENIGMA VIII.

I am composed of 12 letters.  
My 2, 3, 4, 5, is to run hard with somebody.  
My 1, 7, 8, 9, 3, 11, 6, is like a wreath.  
My 12, 10, 2, 9, is a young female.  
My whole is a heroine of Wales.

GENEVIEVE MUDER.

### ENIGMA IX.

I am composed of 13 letters.  
My 5, 6, 7, is a girl's name.  
My 4, 3, 2, is something we wear.  
My 11, 10, is an exclamation of reproof.  
My 8, 13, 6, is what we carry coal in.  
My 11, 1, 2, is what a peasant lives in.  
My 4, 9, 2, is more than warm.  
My 12 is the ninth letter of the alphabet.  
My whole are the names of three States of the Union.

RICHARD LONGLEY.

### CONCEALED CITIES.

1. Adam, as customary in Paradise, snubbed Eve.
2. A good nap lessens the length of the day.
3. France may not bear this rebuff a long time.
4. I sailed past Africa, Oceanica I rounded.
5. The ravings of the mob I leave to your imagination.
6. To get gold to par is the Secretary's prime object.
7. I saw a little maiden very gaily clad.
8. Rent on Cornhill is low but rent on State street is high.

The Myrtle.

### BEHEADINGS.

1. Remove the first letter from vapor and leave a pair; transpose and find a food.
2. Behead a symptom of cold and leave an elevation which beheaded once more becomes very sick.
3. Remove the first letter from a word which means near by or with reference to and leave a contest; once more and you are not at home.

Selected.

### WORD SQUARE.

1. A protective garment.
2. To try by experiment.
3. Beautiful flowers.
4. Plain to the view.
5. "Homes without hands."

Scattered Seeds.

### ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 2.

ENIGMA III.—Missouri Compromise.

ENIGMA IV.—President Woodrow Wilson.

QUEER A B C'S.—B, P, T, X, U, O, V, J, C, Q, I, G, L.

TWISTED STATES.—1. California. 2. Massachusetts. 3. Nebraska. 4. Virginia. 5. Colorado. 6. Pennsylvania. 7. Illinois. 8. Delaware.

He is richest who is content with the least; for content is the wealth of nature.

SOCRATES.

## THE BEACON

REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR

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